

# Freighter Gets Ready For Prisoners' Families

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HAVANA, Dec. 25.—The crew of the African Pilot worked through Christmas today readying their freighter to take more than 1,000 unexpected passengers to the United States.

The prospective passengers are close relatives of the Bay of Pigs invaders released in exchange for more than \$53 million worth of United States medicines and food.

The last of the 1,113 prisoners flew to Miami yesterday.

The African Pilot brought the first installment of their ransom to Havana. James B. Donovan, the New York lawyer who negotiated the captives' release, got Prime Minister Fidel Castro to allow relatives of the invaders to leave Cuba on the empty ship.

Mr. Castro also promised to discuss the early release of 23 Americans held in Cuban jails for anti-Castro activities, Mr. Donovan said.

## To Sail Tomorrow

The African Pilot is scheduled to sail tomorrow for Port Everglades, about 30 miles north of Miami and a 12-hour run from Havana. After unloading its passengers, the ship will pick up a second load of ransom medicine and food and return to Havana. It brought \$11 million worth on its first trip this week.

The 10,000-ton freighter normally handles only 18 passengers. The crew was prepping emergency accommodations in its empty holds and on sheltered decks for the refugee passengers.

Mr. Donovan flew to Miami yesterday to get together a party of medical personnel to care for women and children on the voyage. He said the ship had ample water and that Mr.

Castro had said he would supply the necessary food.

## Navy Escort Expected

The ship's engineering personnel strung additional lights in the holds. Red Cross officials got together a supply of mats and cots.

Because the ship does not have enough lifeboats or rafts for so many people, the United States Navy is expected to escort the freighter after it leaves Cuban waters.

The officers and men of the African Pilot appeared to take pride in the extra duty.

The seamen had signed aboard the freighter in Baltimore a week ago realizing that they probably would not be home for Christmas. Now they probably will not make it until after the new year.

Meanwhile, Havana newspapers prominently displayed the prisoners' ransom. One front-page picture showing medicine boxes was under a headline that declared: "U. S. A. pays the price of its War-mongering."

Other stories and pictures told of the ship's visit, unloading of cargo and the two-hour tour of Havana that Mr. Castro gave four Americans Sunday night. Also published was a complete list of the prisoners and the ransom price originally demanded for each.